

Washington Wildlife & Recreation Program

Evaluation Criteria

Urban Wildlife Habitat Category
(State & Local Agencies)

“Urban Wildlife Habitat means lands that provide habitat important to wildlife in proximity to a metropolitan area.” RCW 79A.15.010

WWRP - Urban Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Summary		
Criteria	Evaluation Elements	Possible Points
Project Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locate the project on statewide, vicinity, and site maps• Brief summary of the project (goals and objective(s) statement)	Not scored
Ecological and Biological Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The bigger picture• Uniqueness/significance of the site• Fish and wildlife species and or communities• Quality of Habitat	20
Species and Communities with Special Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threat to species/communities• Importance of acquisitions• Ecological roles• Taxonomic distinctness• Rarity	10
Manageability and Viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediacy of threat to the site• Long-term viability• Enhancement of existing protected land	15
Public Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project support• Educational and/or scientific value	5
Public Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential for, and appropriate level of, public use	5
Prescored	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GMA Planning Requirement	0/-1
Prescored	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Population of, and proximity to, the nearest urban area	5
Total Points Possible		59/60

WWRP Scoring Criteria

Urban Wildlife Habitat Category

1. ECOLOGICAL /BIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS. Why is the site worthy of long-term conservation?

“Paint a picture” of your project for the evaluators - the what, where, and why. This is the “heart” of your presentation and evaluators will draw conclusions based on the information presented about the *quality and function of the habitat* and the *demonstrated need to protect* it for fish and/or wildlife.

THE BIGGER PICTURE. How is this project supported by a current plan (i.e., local, watershed, statewide, agency, conservation, open space, or species management plans)? What is the status of the plan? What process was used to identify this project as a priority? What specific role does this project play in a broader watershed or landscape picture? Is it part of a phased project? Is it a stand-alone site/habitat?

UNIQUENESS/SIGNIFICANCE. Explain how the site is unique or significant on a regional, ecosystem, watershed, and/or urban growth area level. How unique is the site in relation to habitat quality, connectivity, diversity, rarity? How is the site important in providing critical habitat or biological function for wildlife species/communities? How does this site compare to others of the same type?

FISH AND WILDLIFE SPECIES AND/OR COMMUNITIES. What significant species/communities currently use the site? Which, if any, are the target species or communities¹? (*“Target species” may or may not be special status species.*) Are the target species/communities geographically isolated to this particular site? Explain the condition of the population of target species. Which species have the potential and likelihood to use the site in the future and will reintroduction occur naturally or otherwise?

QUALITY OF HABITAT. Describe the ecological and biological quality of the habitat. What specific role does the habitat play in supporting the species/communities using the site? How is this habitat important in providing food, water, cover, connectivity, and resting areas? Are the size, quality, and other characteristics of the habitat adequate to support the target species/communities within the context of the Project Area? Has the habitat or characteristics of the site been identified as limiting factors to the target species/communities?

¹ A *target species or community* is your project’s primary objective for protection and stands to gain the greatest benefit from the acquisition. For example, a project’s primary objective may be to acquire and protect high quality shrub-steppe. This is the “target community,” but that community also provides important habitat for shrub-steppe-dependent species.

2. Species and/or Communities with Special Status. What is the significance of each species or community listed on your species and communities status matrix (page 9)?

In the interest of time, you may want to address only the species or communities that benefit the most from this project. This question's intent is to determine the significance of the species or communities with special status and how they may benefit from your project. Some special status species or communities may benefit on a more passive basis, while others may benefit directly.

IMMEDIACY OF THREAT TO THE SPECIES AND COMMUNITIES. Describe the immediacy of threat to the species/community (e.g., imminent danger of extinction (range-wide); in imminent danger of extirpation (population); threatened within the foreseeable future, or concern because of current trends; population stable, but catastrophic event could threaten; no foreseeable threat).

IMPORTANCE OF ACQUISITION TO SPECIES/COMMUNITY PROTECTION OR RECOVERY. Describe the relative importance of this acquisition when compared to other protection /recovery tasks such as habitat restoration, captive breeding, translocation, regulatory protection, etc. Describe the distribution or range and, if known, the abundance of the species or community. Identify any recovery plans, conservation strategies or similar plans that include reference to this site.

ECOLOGICAL ROLES. Does the species play an especially important role in the ecosystem in which it lives? Do other species depend on it for their survival? Will its loss substantially alter the functioning of the ecosystem?

TAXONOMIC DISTINCTNESS. How evolutionarily distinct is the species or community in question? That is, is it recognized as the only species in its genus or is it one of ten species in the genus? Is it only recognized as a subspecies? Some scientists think that more evolutionarily distinct organisms should have a higher priority for protection. Based on this assumption, if all else is equal, saving the sole surviving member of a genus may have a higher priority than saving an imperiled species within a large genus that contains many other species. Similarly, protecting a full species would normally be given a higher priority than protecting a subspecies and population. Example: The Olympic mudminnow (*Novumbra hubbsi*) is the sole surviving member of its genus *Novumbra*, whereas, the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) is a member of a large genus containing 37 species.

RARITY. Describe the distribution or range and, if known, the abundance of the species or community. Examples: The Olympic mudminnow occurs in western Washington and nowhere else in the world. The number of populations are fewer than in the past, but 14 of 16 populations monitored from 1993-1998 appear stable and in no immediate danger of extinction. The peregrine falcon is cosmopolitan, occurring on every continent. The two Washington subspecies were endangered; they increased from a low of 1 known breeding pair in 1978 to 56 breeding pair in 1999. The federal government considers this species recovered in the United States; it was removed from the federal endangered species list in 1999, but will be monitored for another decade.

3. MANAGEABILITY AND VIABILITY. What is the likelihood of the site remaining viable over the long term and why is it important to secure it now?

This question's intent is to determine whether the site can be managed, and how it will be managed, to protect the target species or communities.

IMMEDIACY OF THREAT TO THE HABITAT. What, and how imminent, are the threats to the habitat at the site (i.e., inherent, ecological, human, conversion, abatable and/or non-abatable threats). Are these new threats or ongoing threats? How do or will these threats affect the function of the habitat? How will protection of the site affect these threats? What steps have already been taken to secure the land or reduce the threats?

LONG-TERM VIABILITY. What regulatory protections are currently afforded to the site (i.e., County Comprehensive Plan, Critical Areas Ordinances, zoning, development regulation, Shoreline Management rules, Forest Practice rules, etc.)? Demonstrate how the site will be managed over time to maintain the desired characteristics. Who will maintain it and what human and financial resources are available to do it? What management needs are there? Is the habitat recoverable? What restorative efforts, if any, are needed/planned? What is happening across the landscape or watershed that may affect the viability of the site? Describe any long-term site monitoring plans and identify who will implement monitoring?

ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING PROTECTED LAND. Are there other protected lands (public and private) near or adjoining this site that have complimentary or compatible land uses for the target species (consider wide-ranging or migratory species)? Are they managed in a manner consistent with the needs of the target species/communities? Is this site part of a larger ownership? If so, describe the connectivity and management of the other land.

4. PUBLIC BENEFIT. To what degree do communities, governments, landowners, constituent groups, or academia benefit from or support the project?

This question's intent is to find out what *unique* benefits or support your project provides to organizations or communities. This question should not be equated with "public access" and is not meant to discount projects for *not* having overwhelming support or educational opportunities. It may be that your project has one or the other qualities and not both. Your answer will be scored on those unique qualities and how they are appropriate for, or of benefit to, your project.

PROJECT SUPPORT.

- a. Describe the support/partnerships you have from the community, interest groups, volunteers, public agencies, etc. How have you involved these groups in project development? Explain any known opposition to the project.
- b. Describe and document other monetary means that have been secured to help cover the costs for the project, i.e., grants, donations, in-kind contributions, etc.

EDUCATIONAL AND/OR SCIENTIFIC VALUE. Describe the scientific and educational values of the site. Is there an identified research or educational need documented in a management plan, thesis, or scientific journal related to the habitat, species, or communities at the site? How likely is it that these opportunities will come to fruition? How accessible is the site for these activities?

5. PUBLIC USE. Does this project provide potential opportunities for public access, education, and/or enjoyment?

Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State –2002-2007, Chapters 1 and 5.

Public use/access is only encouraged when and where it is appropriate. The intent of the question is to determine what level of public access is provided that will ensure resource values are sustained. Your answer will be scored on how the opportunities provided are appropriate for, or of benefit to, your project.

DESCRIBE PUBLIC USE THAT IS OR WILL BE PROVIDED AND WHY IT IS APPROPRIATE. How will public use be managed to sustain resource values? Include important or unique details about construction techniques, placement of structures, timing of activities and access, on-site stewards, guided tours, etc. How likely is it that the public will use the site? How accessible is the site (in terms of remoteness, driving directions, distance from populated areas). Does the site provide opportunity for one or more special needs group? Will the site provide barrier-free access to persons challenged by sensory, mobility and or mental abilities? If so, briefly describe the facilities and how they meet ADA requirements/guidelines.

DESCRIBE WHY PUBLIC USE IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THIS SITE. How will the site be managed to limit or restrict public use. Describe what it is about the site, habitat, or the species using the site, that makes it sensitive to public use. What other opportunities exist nearby for recreational or educational experiences by the public?

Appropriate level of public use when:	Possible points
Access is provided	0-5 pts.
Access is not provided	0-3 pts.

6. GMA PREFERENCE. Has the applicant made progress toward meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA)?

RCW 43.17.250 (GMA-preference required.)

State law requires that:

- (1) Whenever a state agency is considering awarding grants to finance public facilities, it shall consider whether the applicant[†] has adopted a comprehensive plan and development regulations as required by RCW 36.70A.040 ("state law").
- (2) When reviewing such requests, the state agency shall accord additional preference to applicants[†] that have adopted the comprehensive plan and development regulations. An applicant[†] is deemed to have satisfied the requirements for adopting a comprehensive plan and development regulations if it:
 - Adopts or has adopted within the time periods specified in state law;
 - Adopts or has adopted by the time it requests a grant or loan; or
 - Demonstrates substantial progress toward adopting within the time periods specified in state law. An agency that is more than six months out of compliance with the time periods has not demonstrated substantial progress.
- (3) A request from an applicant planning under state law shall be accorded no additional preference based on subsection (2) over a request from an applicant not planning under this state law.

This question is pre-scored by IAC staff based on information obtained from the state Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, GMA Division. To qualify for the current grant cycle, the GMA comprehensive plan and development regulations must be completed by IAC's Technical Completion Deadline.

- a. The applicant does *not* meet the requirements of RCW 43.17.250 (minus 1 point)
- b. The applicant *meets* the requirements of RCW 43.17.250 (0 points)
- c. The applicant is a nonprofit organization, state or federal agency (0 points)

IAC staff subtracts a maximum of 1 point; there is no multiplier.

[†] County, city, town, and special district applicants only. This segment of the question does not apply to nonprofit organizations or state and federal agency applicants.

7. PROXIMITY TO URBAN AREAS. Where is this project located with respect to urban growth areas, cities/towns, and county density?

Acquisition/Development; RCW 79A.25.250 (IAC urban area parks);
RCW 79A.15.060 (6)(b)(i)(WWRP);

This question is scored by IAC staff based on a map provided by the applicant. To receive credit, the map must describe the project area and contain a circle with a five-mile radius. As its hub, the circle must use the point on the project's boundary closest to a city or town. The single city or town (if any, including urban growth area boundary) with the highest population touched by the circles is counted in part "a," below. The result from "a" (cities) is added to the result from "b" (counties). This takes into account that counties with high *average* densities are made up of both high and low density areas.

Projects located near cities over 5000 population *and* within high density counties receive points from both "a" and "b".

A. Within 5 miles of a GMA urban growth area boundary or the boundary of an incorporated city/town. In either case, the score is based on the city/town population (OFM):

- 0 -4,999 (0 points)
- 5,000 -9,999 (1 point)
- 10,000 -29,999 (2 points)
- 30,000 -149,999 (3 points)
- 150,000 -299,999 (4 points)
- 300,000 -and above (5 points)

B. In a county with a population density (OFM) of:

- 0 -249 (0 points)
- 250 -324 (1 point)
- 325 -399 (2 points)
- 400 -474 (3 points)
- 475 -549 (4 points)
- 550 -and above (5 points)

IAC staff awards a maximum of 10 points that are later multiplied by 0.5.

Revised March 1997

Instructions: Species and Communities with Special Status Table

Species and Communities With Special Status Table. Complete and submit the table on page 11. This is a required part of the application. Staff will verify the information and evaluators will be given a copy of the table along with the other project materials. This table relates directly to Evaluation Question #2, Species and Communities with Special Status, with emphasis on the significance of the species. As part of the presentation, applicants must describe the significance information to evaluators for scoring.

Species, Community or Habitat Type. List each species, community, or habitat type with special status present in your project area or work site.

Occurrence. For special status animal species, indicate whether the occurrence of the species at the site is *breeding, feeding, migration, resting, perching, roosting, wintering, rearing, spawning, year-round resident, individual occurrence, or unknown*. For special status plant species, communities or habitat types, enter "N/A" in the occurrence column.

Status and Source. Indicate the status of the species and the source from which you obtained the information. Federal and state status and source information follows:

Federally Listed Species:

- Resident fish and wildlife—Endangered Species Office, Lacey (360) 753-9440
- Pacific salmon species—National Marine Fisheries Service; www.noaa.gov/

State Listed Species and Candidate Species:

- Endangered Species Section, WDFW, (360) 902-2515; www.wa.gov/wdfw/wildlife.htm

Priority Habitats and Species:

- Priority Habitat and Species Program, WDFW, (360) 902-2543; www.wa.gov/wdfw/habitat.htm

State Listed Plant Species and Communities:

- Natural Heritage Program, DNR (360) 902-1667; www.wa.gov/dnr/

IAC will provide data request forms for both state databases. If your information came from a source other than these (such as a consultant or local biologist), please indicate on your form.

Federal Status		State Status	
FE	Endangered	SE	State endangered
FT	Threatened	ST	State threatened
FP	Proposed for threatened or endangered	SS	State sensitive
FC	Candidate for listing status review	SC	Candidate for listing status review
FSC	Species of concern	PS	Priority Species, non-listed but vulnerable
		PH	Priority Habitat
		P1, P2, P3	Priority 1, Priority 2, and Priority 3 (plants)

Example Matrix:

Species, Community or Habitat Type	Occurrence	Status	Source
Douglas Fir/ Western Hemlock/ Swordfern Community	N/A	P 2	DNR – WNHP
Brown Pelican	foraging, resting	FE, SE	WDFW – PHS
Thompson's Clover	N/A	P 2	DNR – WNHP
Chinook Salmon	rearing	FE	NMFS; SSHIAP *
Western Pond Turtle	year-round resident	FSC, SE	USFWS; Consultant
Riparian Area	N/A	PH	WDFW – PHS

* SSHIAP Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Inventory and Assessment Program (NW Indian Fisheries Commission /WDFW)

Species and Communities With Special Status Matrix

Project Name: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Date: _____

Check one: ☐ **Critical Habitat** ☐ **Natural Areas** ☐ **Urban Wildlife Habitat**

[illegible]